

COUGAR ELECTRONICS CORP.

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To: The Labor and Public Employees Committee

SB 32

March 10, 2014

My name is Robert Cowles and I am the president of Cougar Electronics located in New Haven, Ct. We are a small manufacturer of electronic components and assemblies.

I am writing to express my opposition to SB 32. I have worked in manufacturing for the last 50 years and based on what I can see is that most of the leaders of the state and federal government have no idea what is like to work on a production floor. I am totally for giving wage increases for productive people as they learn the job and gain experience. The problem is not giving a small group of new employees more money. It is the ripple effect that occurs after you do this. If I have been with the company for two years and making \$10.50 per hour and all of a sudden a new person is employed at \$10.10 per hour then you can bet your life that I'm going to want that same increase. The ripple effect is going to push the total wage base up which is going to be a killer for any business. In my business it is very difficult to raise prices and we are always fighting competition in other states with lower costs of operating. Years ago I had 300+ people working for me and over time it has been reduced to just 12 people. Most of those jobs have gone off shore.

So for all those people in government keep adding to my cost of doing business and our company will no longer exist and the people working here will no longer have jobs.

Yours truly,



Robert Cowles